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ABSTRACT

This user guide is part of a multimedia unit using an interdisciplinary approach with hands-on learning to motivate children to participate actively in their schools and local communities, and to experience the democratic process. This unit focuses on the story of the "Star Spangled Banner" and understanding how music celebrates special feelings. Unit parts include: (1) video preview; (2) suggestions for using the unit; (3) getting ready to view the video; (4) video modeling lesson; (5) follow-up activities for primary, intermediate, and upper grade children; and (6) a bibliography for children and teachers. (EH)

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For Grades K-6

My America
Building a Democracy

CC

Available in English and Spanish

ED 404 267

The Story of the National Anthem

User Guide

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My America: Building a Democracy

GOALS

To help children:

- become familiar with the democratic process and active citizenship,
- recognize what it means to be a citizen in a multicultural society,
- build skills in communications and cooperation,
- recognize how laws are made and how a single vote and voice matter, and
- experience how caring and commitment build community.

FORMAT

MY AMERICA is a 12-unit series, consisting of:

- 15-20 minute videos
- User Guides
- Resource Directory Disks (MS-DOS & MAC)

Materials were designed by educators, for educators. An interdisciplinary approach to hands-on learning is used.

"Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world: indeed it's the only thing that ever has."

—Margaret Mead

EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

The MY AMERICA kits motivate children to participate actively in their schools and local communities, and to experience the democratic process. The series attempts to demystify the government, explain how laws are made, and show how American democracy is always evolving. MY AMERICA combines elements of traditional civics and social studies curricula with techniques and activities that encourage children to participate and become involved. **Its underlying theme is: Democracy works best when everyone participates.**

MY AMERICA teaches in the voices of children in a way that respects their intelligence and natural curiosity.

THE VIDEOS

Each tape contains on-location documentaries, animation and historical illustration. A classroom modeling lesson encourages children to use their skills in reading, writing, listening, painting, singing and performing. The cooperative learning model is central to each video.

Videos are developed within the following framework:

Kid View: Children give thought-provoking, lively opinions on each topic.

Documentary: Historical context and current concerns are blended with examples of children making a difference in their communities. This section is rich in historical information and opens up a wide range of discovery possibilities.

Modeling Lesson: Educators and students develop an interdisciplinary activity designed to bring alive the educational objective of the video.

Wrap Up: The key concept is recapped from the diverse perspectives of both children and adults.

PAUSE POINTS

The videotapes can be used in a variety of ways. Some educators use the tapes to teach three separate lessons on a concept. To facilitate this usage, a blackboard icon comes up between the Kid View, the Documentary and the Modeling Lesson, giving educators appropriate PAUSE POINTS during which to elaborate on concepts.

THE USER GUIDES

Guides provide multiple learning experiences, lesson plans and bibliographies built around social studies and citizenship themes. Suggested activities are interdisciplinary in approach and focus on skills in communication and cooperation.

RESOURCE DIRECTORY DISKS (MS-DOS & MAC)

MY AMERICA Resource Directory Disks include black-lined master activity sheets, samples of letters to parents and organizations, petitions, proclamations and press releases—all of which can be customized. Also included are a listing of additional resources, bibliographic references for students and teachers, historical documents, and curriculum correlations.

This icon indicates that additional material is available on the MY AMERICA Resource Directory Disk.

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The Story of the National Anthem

My America
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Educational objective:

To learn the story of the "Star Spangled Banner" and understand how music celebrates special feelings.

Student concept:

I feel proud when I hear the national anthem.

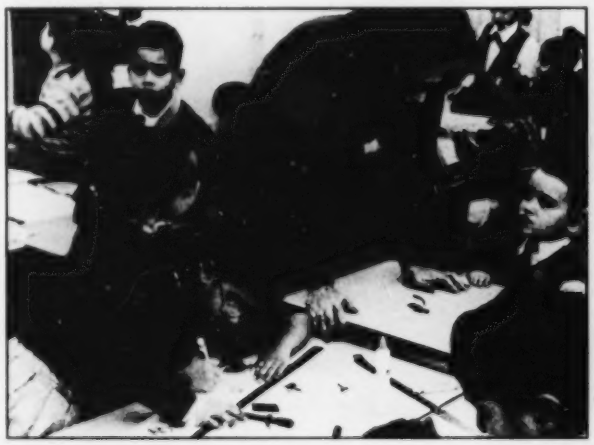
Video preview

Children describe instances in which they hear the national anthem, how it feels to sing it with others, and how difficult it is to hit the high notes. The children learn how one person's feelings became a musical symbol of democracy. When the United States was only 30 years old, the country was at war with England yet again. The Battle of Fort McHenry gave four people a chance to make history. Major George Armistead, the fort's commander, asked flagmakers Mary Pinkersgill and her daughter, Carolyn, to produce an American flag large enough for the British to see from a distance. Francis Scott Key, a lawyer and a poet, watched the 25-hour battle while held captive on a British ship. When the smoke cleared and he saw the huge flag, tattered but still flying, he expressed his feelings in a poem, which was quickly circulated and set to music of a popular song of the day. A class writes words and music to celebrate the Golden Rule in a special song.

"The Star Spangled Banner is something very special to me. It's something for our country that began as a poem, but now is our national anthem."

—Third Grader
Texas

Suggestions for using "The Story of the National Anthem"



As an Opening and/or Culminating Experience to a Unit of Study: The video and suggested activities are designed to supplement your existing social studies curriculum. They are highly motivating resources to help students understand the power of music to express deep emotions.

As an Individual Lesson: Suggested activities can easily be used to open discussion about how creating a song involves experiencing and expressing powerful feelings, especially when the song celebrates a country and its dream. The activities are divided among those appropriate for primary, intermediate and upper elementary school children.

As an Assembly Program: To prepare for viewing the video, a facilitator prints all the stanzas of the song from the MY AMERICA. Before the assembly, the sheets are distributed to students so they can learn what the words mean and practice how to sing it. At assembly, all classes sing the full song together. Then introduce *"The Story of the National Anthem"* video.

My America
Building a Democracy

The Story of the National Anthem

"The exciting thing about writing a collective song with children is that they learn not only to work together, but that creativity is open to everyone. We are all artists creating our lives every day."

—Rodney Wittenberg
Carl Benner School
Coatsville, PA
Modeling Teacher
The Banner Project

Getting ready to view the video

Throughout time, songs have been used to open the hearts and minds of people all over the Earth. When new countries are born, a yearning often emerges for a special song or anthem that brings people together around a common theme.

• Generate a list of the countries of the children's family roots. Have them research the national anthems of these countries. What is the story surrounding the creation of the special song? What are the lyrics? How does the music make them feel? Children can work individually or in teams to present a country's anthem and its story to the entire class. Include showing where the country is on a globe or world map.

• Working toward a common goal requires open-mindedness, patience and good communications skills. The video illustrates how people energize each other when they cooperate creatively. Each story stirs hope for the possibility that children and adults *can* collaborate and care for each other and the Earth. See the MY AMERICA for an activity sheet.

• Music recharges our brains and spirits. Different tones and frequencies of sound can affect and enliven our senses. Every day for a week, play two very different types of music. Focus on pieces they know—theme music from a popular movie—and those they don't know—madrigals or Gregorian chants. Have the children take note of the music that moves and excites them. Anthems are made of these feelings.

Key vocabulary: anthem, sound, theme, poem, music, lyrics, emotion, spangled, banner, fort, frequency, tone, adjectives, loudness, pitch, quality

Video Modeling Lesson: Writing a Song

★To create a song with your children, first ask "What is the song's theme?" List all their ideas on the front board or a chart after brainstorming.

★Vote for the best theme. The number of votes counted is listed next to each theme. The idea with the highest response becomes the theme.

★Closing their eyes, the children take time to think about the chosen theme. In the video, they come up with ideas about the "Golden Rule" —what it is, how it works in their lives and how they feel about it. These ideas become the lyrics of the collective song.

★Discuss the different types of music the children enjoy—rap, jazz, folk or rock 'n roll. Ask the children to beat out the rhythms with a pencil on the desk. If possible, play a few chords on an instrument. If you don't play an instrument, bring in tapes showing different styles, or ask a colleague who plays, to help out.

★List the musical styles under discussion. The children vote on the musical style for the collective song-writing experience.

★Generate a few chords in the chosen style and get the children's reactions to the "feel" of the notes. What sounds best for the theme or meaning of the lyrics? Fitting the lyrics and music together is at the heart of the collaborative experience.

★Practice singing the song! Audiotape the sessions.

★Celebrate! Invite other classes, parents, teachers and administrators to a performance.

Modeling Lesson Materials: chalk, chart, marker, audiotape player/recorder, a musical instrument (if available), sample songs in different musical styles.

Modeling Lesson Resource: Write to or call The Banner Project, Diamond Rock Road in Phoenixville, PA, 19460 for a detailed lesson plan on collaborative song writing and performance. See Bibliography for more information on The Banner Project.

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Follow-up activities for primary grade children

★Divide the students into pairs and have them observe each other's ears. Give them an opportunity to describe the shape, color, texture, line and overall form of their classmate's ear. Then have them draw pictures of each other's ears. Ask them why they think we have two ears?

★Describe how human beings have an inner ear as well as an outer ear. Have them imagine and then draw what the inner ear looks like on the reverse side of their outer ear drawing. Show them a diagram of the inner ear. Compare their drawings to the actual ear diagram. Invite an audiologist to visit and demonstrate how the ear works. See MY AMERICA for an activity sheet.

★All sounds are vibrations. Place a 12" (30 cm) ruler on a table so that about 5" of it projects over the table's edge. Use a ruler that does not have metal on the side. Firmly hold one end while you pull the free end down and then let it go. Have the students compare the sounds and focus on how vibrations vary with the length of the ruler. Try rubber bands of varying thickness and listen for different sounds.

★Vibrations from low, deep sounds feel different than those from high-pitched sounds. Have the children touch their faces, throats, lips and cheeks to feel the vibrations when they make sounds. Has anyone ever sung them to sleep at night? How did it make them feel?

Follow-up activities for intermediate grade children

★Some children hear differently all the time; they sense musical vibration through the floor. Buy a few pairs of ear plugs and ask the children to bring in ear muffs. Each day have two or three children experience a period of time without sound to sensitize them. Have them put the ear muffs over the ear plugs to eliminate sound. Ask them to write and draw about life without sound. Create a bulletin board of the words and drawings that emerge from altering the sense of hearing.

"The world springs into existence through sound."

—Jean Houston, PhD

★The goal is for children to pay attention to the sound that surrounds them and how it affects their feelings. What is it about music or sound that motivates us to do things? Design a Listening Chart on which the children make note of specific sounds and the feelings they produced during a 24-hour period in their lives.

★Songs often require words to rhyme. Eight-to-ten-year olds naturally love humorous riddles, rhymes, and clapping games. Ask them to perform their favorite ones. Keep the beat of the riddle or rhyme with a drum or tambourine. Pass the instrument around so they keep the beat. Have them describe the feelings that emerge when rhythm or rhyme is added to sound. Check the MY AMERICA for a listing of songs and games.

Find It In The MY AMERICA

- **The lyrics to the Video Modeling Lesson song "Let's Work Together."**

My America
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The Story of the National Anthem

Did You Know That?

- **Mary Pickersgill's mother made flags for George Washington during the Revolutionary War.**
- **Fort McHenry is known as the "Star Fort" because the walls form the shape of a star.**
- **Mary Pickersgill presented Major Armistead with a bill for $574.44 for the 30' x 42' American flag.**

Follow-up activities for upper grade children

★Brainstorm how to do a listening analysis of a weekend in their lives. The goal is to pay attention to the sound surrounding them and how it affects their feelings. Expand the exercise to include whether they liked or disliked the feelings the sounds produced. They can design individual charts to keep track of the sounds and feelings. Write descriptive paragraphs of the sound or group of sounds.

★The Egyptians believed that the singing sun started the universe. Ask the children to imagine they are the original singing sun. Have them describe the energy a singing sun would require. Make a semantic map of their descriptive words to help them learn the meanings by association. Have them draw a picture of themselves as a singing sun.

★Ask what words and music they would use to celebrate the birth of the planets, stars, galaxies and all the abundant life that exists in our universe. What feelings would they like their Singing Sun anthem to create in the hearts and minds of listeners? Refer to their Listening Analysis Charts for personal reactions to different kinds of music.

★Invite parents, teacher, children and administrators to a performance of anthems from many different countries. This is the second part of the Getting Ready To View the Video activity on page 3. Children can create a show around the anthems by sharing what was discovered about music, lyrics and feelings at their first public performance of a few of the Singing Sun anthems. Include food from the countries as part of the experience.

★Discuss how the words of the Star Spangled Banner were set to a song that was popular in 1814. For a humorous experience, have the children try to sing the words of the Star Spangled Banner to the tune of their favorite song. Do the words and music fit together? How does the musical style affect the mood of the song? Check the MY AMERICA for all the stanzas of the National Anthem.

The MY AMERICA Newsletter publishes active citizenship projects and activities. Send your photos, stories, and videotapes to:

MY AMERICA Newsletter
c/o New Castle Communications
229 King Street
Chappaqua, NY 10514

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FOR TEACHERS

The Banner Project creates positive community change through art and cultural programs for children. Creating songs, murals and performance together, staff help children see that focus and perseverance on a positive goal are powerful change agents. For detailed lesson plans and other resources, contact The Banner Project, Diamond Rock Road, Phoenixville, PA, 610-935-2633.

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Check the MY AMERICA for additional books, resources and activity sheets.

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MY AMERICA:
LEARNING ABOUT
DEMOCRACY

USER GUIDES and DIRECTORY DISK

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What Is a Flag?
A Pledge Is a Promise
Neighborhood and Community
Liberty and Justice
What Is an American?
The Story of the National Anthem
What Is a Democracy??
How Our Laws Are Made
Becoming an Active Citizen
Rights and Responsibilities

Teaching in a Multicultural Society (For Teachers)
Parents, Teachers and Community: Working Together (For Parents)

Resources available, AT NO CHARGE, when you purchase the entire multimedia series:
MY AMERICA Newsletter: published three times during the school year.
MY AMERICA Teacher Training Video: 10 classroom activities around civic issues.

"In our every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations."

—The Great Law of the Six Nations
Iroquois Confederacy

About New Castle Communications, Inc.
MY AMERICA is published by New Castle Communications, Inc. The company is creating educational materials in video, print and computer software formats. New Castle Communications is committed to designing, producing and distributing multimedia materials that engage children and inspire them to get involved in their classrooms, schools and communities.

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